

# **Department of Natural Resources Land Records**

## **Frequently Asked Questions When Using Status Plats**

### ***What is a Status Plat?***

The Status Plat is the graphic representation of the state's land record containing land status information the state has ownership, management or an interest in within the state. The status plat also contains hydrographic, survey and infrastructure data to help in locating and describing areas within state ownership or interest. For further information see [http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords/docs/sp\\_manual.pdf](http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords/docs/sp_manual.pdf)

### ***What is an "ADL" and "LAS"?***

ADL is the abbreviation for Alaska Division of Land and is also used as a prefix/filetype to tracking numbers associated with Alaska Division of Land casefiles. LAS is the abbreviation for the states Land Administration System <https://nutmeg.state.ak.us/ixpress/dnr/case/lasmenu.dml> and is also used as a prefix/filetype to tracking numbers associated with Land Administration System casefiles.

### ***Why isn't there more geographic feature shown on the status plats?***

The status plat's main purpose is to provide a graphic representation of the state's land record. Trying to show too much information on one plat would cause extreme congestion and could become useless. Landmarks such as cities, mountains and ranges can be referenced using the USGS quadrangle maps. Roads are shown when land status information needs clarification and for some of the larger roads within the state. River and Lake Names are shown on the status plat based on information from the associated USGS quadrangle.

### ***What methods do you use to describe land parcels?***

Parcels of land are described in various ways depending on whether there is an actual survey; metes and bounds description or it is part of the rectangular net system, i.e.; Meridian/Township/Range/Section/Aliquot part. For further information see <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords/docs/landrecords.pdf>

### ***How do I determine who owns a particular parcel of land?***

Review the status plat and determine if the state ever received title, if so; review the status plat and determine if the state ever disposed of the parcel, (it will have an ADL tracking number assigned) if so; Enter the ADL number in the Research Casefiles (LAS) <https://nutmeg.state.ak.us/ixpress/dnr/case/lasmenu.dml> The abstract will provide certain ownership, location, and status information concerning that parcel. The status plat or LAS does not maintain information on land sale transactions once it has been patented out of state ownership. For further land status information you need to contact the State Records Office <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ssd/recoff/default.htm> to trace the line of title. If the parcel was never in state

ownership, it would not be tracked on the LAS. Once again you would need to contact either the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) <http://www.ak.blm.gov> or the State Records Office. <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ssd/recoff/default.htm>

***How can I locate a township or parcel of land on your system if I only have the latitude/longitude?***

There are two methods to locate information by latitude and longitude. The first method allows you to enter the lat and long through the Land Records Application <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords> by selecting the All Related Records or by selecting the Status Plats & HI category. Under each category you will have an option to Locate by Lat/Long. This will return the results of either all records for the township or only the status plats and HI available. For a more specific search, there is a cross-reference tool available <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ssd/whitest/twp5.html> that will convert a latitude/longitude value and provide the meridian, township, range, and section information. This will assist in narrowing down your search to a specific section or map. Once the township information is returned, this can be entered in the LandRecords Application <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords> by selecting Locate by MTR under the All Related Records or Status Plats & HI category.

***How can I tell where I can stake a mining claim?***

First, determine land ownership for the area you wish to stake. If it is state ownership, review the status plat to determine if the area is open to staking a mining claim. You would then need to ensure there are not any valid existing claims. If the area is open to filing claims and no one else has a valid existing claim, you may file a claim.

***What is an ASLS, USS, HI, etc.?***

These are abbreviations for other graphic representation (plats) or records documents containing information associated with a particular parcel or area. For further information on abbreviations refer to [http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/cgi-bin/lris/sgu\\_abbreviations](http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/cgi-bin/lris/sgu_abbreviations)

***Why are there some plats called “Land, Mineral and Water Estate Plats” and some called “Status Plats”?***

Most plats maintained by the state are status plats. The status plat represents all surface and subsurface activity the may affect the land owned or managed by the state. When a twp becomes complex with surface and subsurface activity it may be necessary to separate the information into Estates. The estate system allows for clearer graphic representation of the surface and subsurface use. For example: The land estate will represent the surface activity and the mineral estate will represent the subsurface activity. Both estates may show the same information affecting the surface and subsurface. Both estate maps should be referred to when researching land records. For more information on understanding the status plat refer to <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords/docs/manual.pdf>

***How do I tell what the lines on the map mean?***

There is a legend on each map that specifies what each line and/or point symbol represents. Example: The solid black thick black line on the plat represents a title line. A title line identifies land that has at one time or still is owned by the state. Also, there will be a reference at the bottom of the area that tells by which grant the State

received ownership. Other lines within the titled area would indicate subsequent activity such as classification and/or disposal actions. For further information or reading a status plat see [http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords/docs/sp\\_manual.pdf](http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/landrecords/docs/sp_manual.pdf)

***How can I find out information about a particular file number; who owns it or what the state is doing with it?***

Enter the Land Administration System (LAS) file type and file number after selecting the Research Casefiles (LAS) <https://nutmeg.state.ak.us/ixpress/dnr/case/lasmenu.dml> The abstract will provide certain ownership, location, and status information concerning that parcel. For detailed information, restrictions and other actions affecting the parcel you should review the status plat (link to image), and you may need to research further utilizing the Land Administration System at a DNR Public Information Office

***What does “See Sec Suppl”, “See Detail,”or “See Sheet” mean on the Status plat?***

Sometimes an area is too congested or small to be readable at the main scale of a plat. To ensure the action is readable, an enlarged view of the area is created. Keep in mind that when viewing a main scale plot with a “See Sec Suppl, See Detail or See Sheet”; the supplemental or detail sheet must be viewed to see all the information associated with the area of interest.

***What is the difference between MH, SCH, GS, and NFCG lands?***

The state acquires title to lands under several grant types. Each type of grant had acreage accountability and stipulations on how the state had to manage the acquired land. Most state land is or was acquired from the federal government. Occasionally the state requires land from other means such as an OSL.

***How can I purchase state owned land?***

At the present time, the state has a land disposal program using the sealed bid auction system. You may only purchase the land offered through these land disposals. If you are interested in having a particular piece of land offered for sale, you are invited to write a letter to the Division of Land and request that a particular parcel be considered for the next land disposal. The state does not negotiate private sales.

***Can you tell me who the most recent owner is on a certain parcel?***

We can only tell you who the owner was at the time the state transferred title. You would need to research the title line via the Recorder’s Office, <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ssd/recoff/default.htm> or hire a title search company to determine ownership.

***Can you tell me what lands are owned by native corporations in certain areas?***

We can tell you which native corporation is assigned to the specific area of Alaska. You would need to contact that corporation for further information.

***Why is my land not shown on your status plat?***

If the land were never in state ownership the state would not have a record of any land transactions. For this information you would need to go to the Recorder's Office <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ssd/recoff/default.htm> to follow the line of title.

***If I own a parcel of land, do I own the subsurface?***

Your patent document, deed or contract will specify what you are buying or have already purchased. The State of Alaska retains ownership of all subsurface minerals on most land transactions.

***I want to ensure that I have legal access to my property. What do I look for?***

First thing would be to review the status plat and/or survey plat to determine if a dedicated access already exists. Serialized right of ways and easements on the status plat provide access for the purposes specified in the LAS/ADL case file. If there is not already platted access, you could determine who owns the land between your parcel and the closest access point and possibly apply for an access easement (depending on who owns the property). General state land and navigable water bodies provide general public access within statutory and regulatory limits. Many section lines have public access easements and you could research further to determine if a section line easement actually exists.

***Are there any surveys done for my area?***

The state status plats generally depict available surveys defining state interest. If you purchased the land from the State of Alaska, a survey should be available. To see other surveys you may need to review the BLM MTP, or you may need to consult another platting authority i.e.; city, municipality or borough.